

**INSTITUTO SUPERIOR DE EDUCAÇÃO**  
**Departamento de Línguas Estrangeiras**  
**English Studies Centre**

**Topic: English for Specific Purposes in Cape Verde**

*What has been done and the way forward*  
*1984 -2006*

**Author: Obdúlia Figueiredo**  
**Licenciatura em Estudos Ingleses**  
**Praia, 29 de Setembro de 2006**

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Trabalho científico apresentado por Obdúlia Figueiredo ao Instituto Superior de Educação para obtenção do grau de Licenciatura em Estudos Ingleses sob orientação da Professora Deanna Reese

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**O júri**

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**29 de Setembro de 2004**

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## **I. Introduction**

Since the 1990's, Cape Verde has been committed to the integration into the global economy, and the government has been promoting foreign investment, particularly in tourism, fishing, light manufacturing, communications, and transportation. Thus, the adoption of a new economic model and the opening of the Capeverdean economy to foreign investors increased the demand for proficiency in English.

One of the main axes of the economic development of the country is tourism but so far it has been restricted mainly to the islands of Sal and Boa Vista. The opening of a new international airport on Santiago Island last year has brought a larger number of tourists and investors to this island and a number of projects of hotels and tourist villages were approved or are under construction. The need for English for Specific Purposes or ESP courses, was immediately felt for hotel staff, travel agencies, tour operators, restaurants and even taxi drivers and a few ESP courses were set up to meet this demand. TACV organized an ESP course for its staff in 2005 and is planning another one for 2006; BCV and BCA have been providing English training for their staff and Mindelo town hall has set up an English course for taxi drivers.

## **II – Objectives**

Although there is an overall understanding that the market is evolving and that it is necessary to adapt to the new situation, it seems that there has been no harmonized approach concerning English training provided to different staff. Therefore, this work attempts to assess this new trend and its characteristics - the application of ESP theories in Cape Verde – see a few cases in other countries, and make proposals and/or recommendations for ESP in Cape Verde.

## Chapter I

### I.1 – ESP Background Overview

English is the most spoken second language in the world and presently the number of non native English speakers exceeds the number of native speakers. Although English for Specific Purposes is pretty recent in the Capeverdean context, it appeared as a branch of English teaching in the late 1960s and, according to Hutchinson and Waters (1987), “it was not a planned and coherent movement, but rather a phenomenon that grew out of a number of converging trends”.

There are three main reasons common to the emergence of ESP: the demands of a Brave New World, a revolution in linguistics, and focus on the learner (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987):

- First, the end of the Second World War brought with it an " ... age of enormous and unprecedented expansion in scientific, technical and economic activity on an international scale. For various reasons, most notably the economic power of the United States in the post-war world, the role [of international language] fell to English" (p. 6). Also, the Oil Crisis of the early 1970s resulted in Western money and knowledge flowing into the oil-rich countries. The language of this knowledge was English and, consequently, the demand for English increased (p.6).
- The second key reason cited as having an incredible impact on the emergence of ESP was a revolution in linguistics. Linguists had been describing the features of the language but revolutionary pioneers in linguistics began to focus on the ways in which language was used in real communication. One of their conclusions was that written and spoken English vary according to the context. If language in different situations varies, then adapting language instruction to meet the needs of learners in specific contexts is also possible. (p.7)

- The final reason Hutchinson and Waters (1987) cite as having influenced the emergence of ESP has to do with psychology and the focus on learners' needs which led to the design of specific courses to better meet their needs.

The overall consequence was an understanding that there was a new demand in English teaching/ learning which required a new supply, i.e., language teachers had to find ways of meeting the demands of a growing and brand-new market.

## I.2 – ESP Definition

Although ESP emerged in the 1960s, it was only in the 80s that linguists sought for a suitable definition. According to Dudley-Evans and St. John *Developments in English for Specific Purposes* (1998), ESP makes use of a methodology that differs from that used in General Purpose English Teaching and the interaction between teacher and learner is different from that in a general English class. They modified the original Stevens' definition of ESP (Dudley-Evans and St. John 1998) to form their own.

Stevens had defined ESP by identifying four absolute and two variable characteristics:

### **Absolute characteristics:**

ESP consists of English language teaching which is:

- designed to meet specified needs of the learner;
- related in content (i.e. in its themes and topics) to particular disciplines, occupations and activities;
- centered on the language appropriate to those activities in syntax, lexis, discourse, semantics, etc., and analysis of this discourse;
- in contrast with General English.

### **Variable characteristics:**

ESP may be:

- restricted as to the language skills to be learned (e.g. reading only);
- not taught according to any pre-ordained methodology.

At the first Japan Conference on English for Specific Purposes in 1997 ([www.antlab.sci.waseda.ac.jp](http://www.antlab.sci.waseda.ac.jp)), Dudley-Evans presented a modified definition. The revised definition he and St. John proposed is as follows:

#### **Absolute Characteristics**

- ESP is defined to meet specific needs of the learner;
- ESP makes use of the underlying methodology and activities of the discipline it serves;
- ESP is centered on the language (grammar, lexis, register), skills, discourse and genres appropriate to these activities.

#### **Variable Characteristics**

- ESP may be related to or designed for specific disciplines;
- ESP may use, in specific teaching situations, a different methodology from that of general English;
- ESP is likely to be designed for adult learners, either at a tertiary level institution or in a professional work situation. It could, however, be for learners at secondary school level;
- ESP is generally designed for intermediate or advanced students;
- Most ESP courses assume some basic knowledge of the language system, but it can be used with beginners (1998, pp. 4-5).

Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998) have deleted the absolute characteristic that “ESP is in contrast with General English” and added more variable characteristics. They emphasize that ESP is not necessarily related to a specific discipline. Furthermore, ESP is likely to be used with adult learners although it could be used with young adults in a secondary school setting.

ESP concentrates more on language in context than on teaching grammar and language structures. It covers subjects varying from accounting or computer science to tourism and business management. The ESP main point is that English is not taught as a subject separated from the students' real world (or wishes), but it is integrated into a subject matter important to them.



In ESP the four macro skills (listening, reading, speaking and writing) are not equally important. It is a needs analysis that determines which language skills are most needed by the students and the syllabus is designed accordingly. An ESP program, may, for example, emphasize the development of reading skills in students who are preparing for graduate work in business administration; or it might promote the development of spoken skills in students who are studying English in order to become tourist guides.

### I.3 – The ESP Teacher

Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998) describe the true ESP teacher or ESP Practitioner, as needing to perform five different roles. These are: Teacher, Collaborator, Course designer and Materials provider, Researcher and Evaluator.

The first role as *teacher* is synonymous with that of the General English teacher. It is in the performing of the other four roles that differences between the two emerge. In order to meet the specific needs of the learners and adopt the methodology and activities of the target discipline, the ESP Practitioner must first work closely with field specialists. This *collaboration*, however, does not have to end at the development stage and can extend as far as possible. When team teaching is not a possibility, the ESP Practitioner must collaborate more closely with the learners, who will generally be more familiar with the specialized content of materials than the teacher himself.

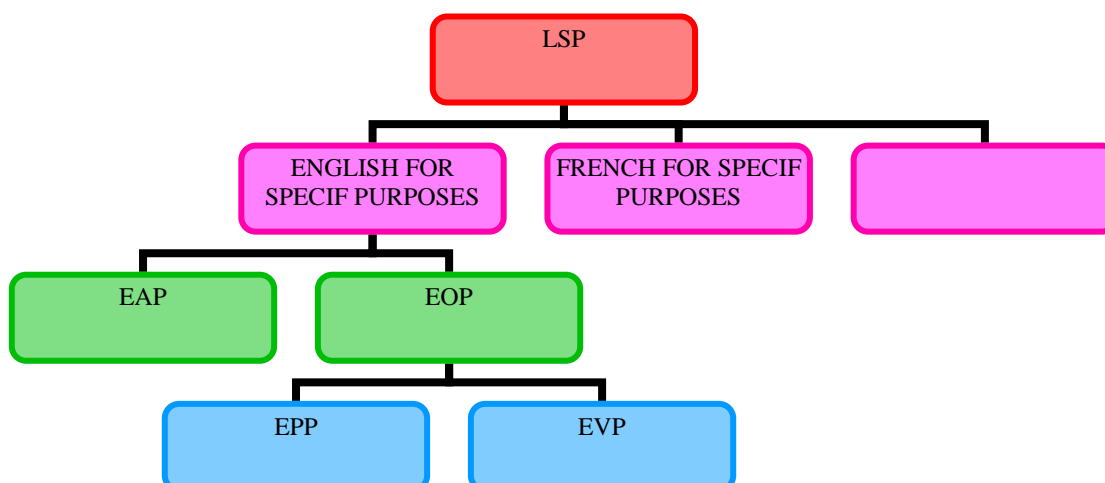
Both General English teachers and ESP practitioners are often required to *design courses* and *provide materials*. One of the main arguments in the field of ESP is how specific those materials should be. Hutchinson & Waters (1987:165) support materials that cover a wide range of fields, arguing that the grammatical structures, functions, discourse structures, skills, and strategies of different disciplines are identical. More recent research, however, has shown that this is not the case. Hansen (1988), for example, describes clear differences between anthropology and sociology texts, and Anthony (1998) shows unique features of writing in the field of engineering. Unfortunately, with the exception of textbooks designed for major fields such as computer science and business studies, most tend to use topics from multiple disciplines, making much of the material superfluous. Many ESP practitioners have no alternative than to develop original materials. Therefore, the ESP practitioner's role as *researcher* is especially important leading to the provision of appropriate materials for the

classroom. The final role as *evaluator* is perhaps the role that ESP practitioners have neglected most to date and there have been few empirical studies that test the effectiveness of ESP courses.

#### I.4 – Types of ESP

English for Specific Purposes is part of a more general movement of teaching Language for Specific Purposes (LSP) and in the 60s, when it emerged, it was mainly English for Academic Purposes (EAP), i.e., the English needed to study/understand a specific discipline or to write a paper about it. English for Occupational Purposes (EOP), i.e., the language proficiency required to perform a given task or profession, played a smaller role. However, this trend has been changing and presently there is a higher demand for EOP, either professional in the fields of administration, law, medicine and business or vocational for non-professionals (Dudley-Evans and St. John 1998). The following diagram illustrates this evolution:

Figure 1: Language for Specific Purposes



It should be noted that the above diagram doesn't meet a consensus and we may find other classifications for ESP. For example, David Carter (1983) identifies three types of ESP:

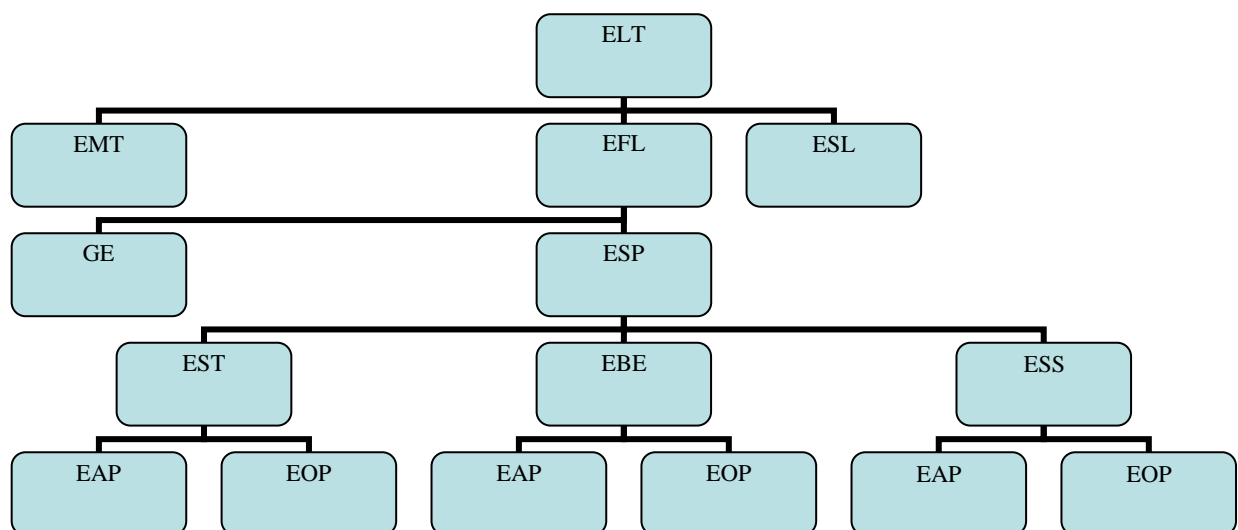
- English as a restricted language
- English for Academic and Occupational Purposes
- English with specific topics.

Mackay and Mountford (1978) clearly illustrate the difference between restricted language and language with this statement:

“... the language of international air-traffic control could be regarded as 'special', in the sense that the repertoire required by the controller is strictly limited and can be accurately determined situationally, as might be the linguistic needs of a dining-room waiter or air-hostess. However, such restricted repertoires are not languages, just as a tourist phrase book is not grammar. Knowing a restricted 'language' would not allow the speaker to communicate effectively in novel situation, or in contexts outside the vocational environment (pp. 4-5).”

The second type of ESP identified by Carter (1983) is English for Academic and Occupational Purposes. In the 'Tree of ELT' (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987), ESP is broken down into three branches: a) English for Science and Technology (EST), b) English for Business and Economics (EBE), and c) English for Social Studies (ESS). Each of these subject areas is further divided into two branches: English for Academic Purposes (EAP) and English for Occupational Purposes (EOP). An example of EOP for the EST branch is “English for Technicians” whereas an example of EAP for the EST branch is “English for Medical Studies”.

Figure 2: Tree of ELT



Hutchinson and Waters (1987) stress that there is not a clear distinction between EAP and EOP: " people can work and study simultaneously; it is also possible that in many cases the language learned for immediate use in a study environment will be used later when the student returns to a job" (p. 16). This may eventually explain why Carter categorized EAP and EOP under the same type of ESP. It seems that Carter is implying that the purpose of both EAP and EOP is the same: employment.

The third and final type of ESP identified by Carter is English with specific topics. Carter notes that here emphasis shifts from purpose to topic. This type of ESP is exclusively concerned with expected future English needs of, for example, graduates requiring English for postgraduate reading, attending conferences or working in foreign institutions.

However, Hutchinson and Waters *English for Specific Purposes* (1987), point out that these different branches have a common aspect: "what the [various specialisms] have in common is that they are all primarily concerned with communication and learning. ESP should properly be seen not as any particular language product but as an approach to language teaching which is directed by specific and apparent reasons for learning" (p. 19). Consequently, an ESP program should be built on an evaluation of the students' specific needs

### I.5 – ESP Motivation

Motivation is related to learners and their purposes for learning English. ESP students are usually adults who already have some knowledge of English and are learning the language in order to communicate a set of professional skills and/or to perform particular functions related to their job. Being able to use the vocabulary and structures that they learn in a meaningful context reinforces what is taught and increases their motivation.

There are advantages in setting up an ESP course where students have specific needs. Strevens (1988) summarizes the advantages of ESP:

- Being focused on the learner's needs, it wastes no time;
- It is relevant to the learner;
- It is successful in imparting learning;

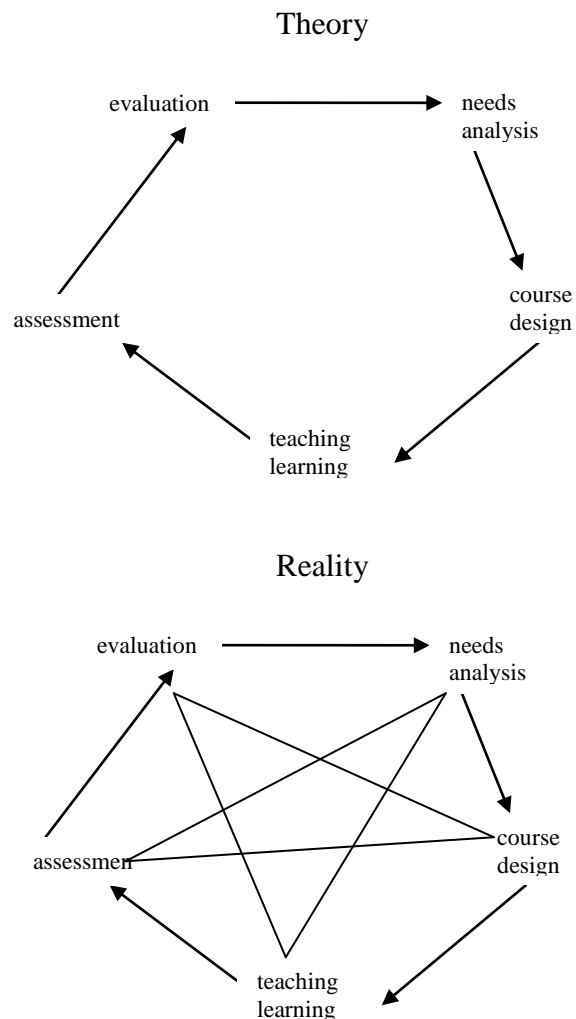
- It is more cost-effective than General English.

The above statements imply that ESP teaching is more motivating for learners than General English, that motivation has an impact on the degree of specificity of the course and that it is closely related to the learners' needs.

#### I.6 – Needs analysis

The key stages in ESP are need analysis, course (and syllabus) design, materials selection (and production), teaching and learning and evaluations. These are not separated, linearly-related activities, rather they represent phases which overlap and are interdependent. (Dudley-Evans & St.John, 1998). In this sense the theory and the reality are not exactly the same.

Figure 3 - Stages in ESP process



According to the above representations needs analysis is done at the beginning and the evaluation in the end. Needs analysis is the process of establishing the *what* and *how* of a course; evaluation is the process of establishing the effectiveness (p. 121).

In the 1960s, when ESP was taking its first steps, ESP teachers didn't know very much about the *what* and *how* and so the language analysis was influenced by General English and the needs were defined in terms of grammar and vocabulary. "When Munby (1978) published his *Communicative Syllabus Design*, the English language teaching world had begun to recognize that function and situation were also fundamental". (Dudley-Evans & St.John, 1998). Presently ESP teachers have other resources that help them determine the learners' needs. They can go over previous needs analysis, identify available materials, check literature for relevant articles, read research findings and contact colleagues.

Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998) identify eight areas that should be identified in order to complete a comprehensive needs analysis in English for Specific Purposes context:

- Target situation analysis and objective needs
- Information concerning learners' wants, means, and subjective needs
- Present situation analysis
- Gap between the target situation and the present situation
- Information concerning learning needs
- Discourse analysis of the target situation
- Desires from the course
- Means analysis

These components of the needs analysis are not eight independent parts, but they are derived from each other and also interact together. For instance, the gap between the target situation and the present situation cannot be determined without first knowing both situations.

Thus, the needs analysis should provide the answers to the following questions:

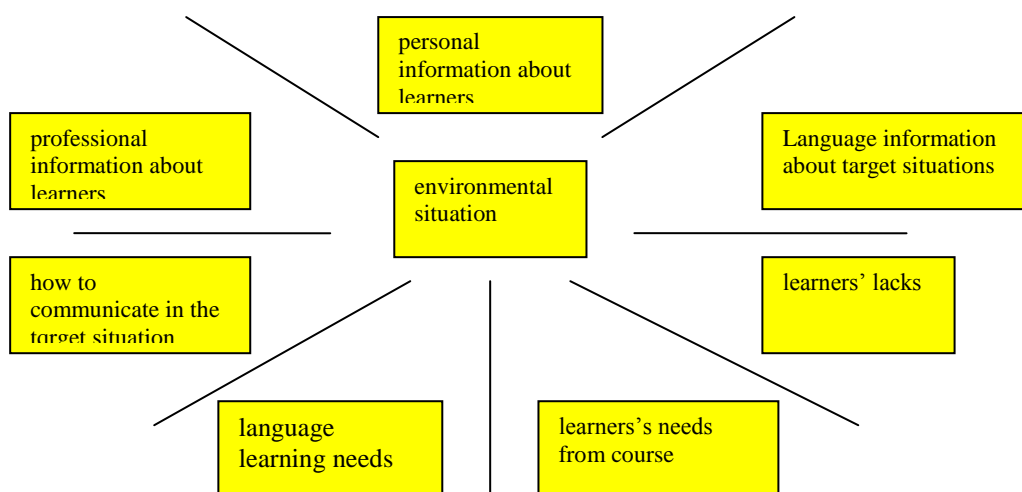
- Why do the students need English?
- In what situation they will have to use English?
- What skill will they use most (speaking, writing, listening, reading)?

- Which one of those skills is most important in this particular case and needs to be developed?
- What do the students consider as essential?
- What are the students' current skills and language use?
- What are the students' expectations from the course?
- Where will the course take place?

Needs may be objective and product-oriented corresponding to a *target situation analysis* (TSA) or subjective and process oriented corresponding, in this case, to a *learning situation analysis* (LSA). What the learners already know, a *present situation analysis* (PSA), helps the teacher determine their lacks and completes the needs analysis. "Thus, a TSA includes objective, perceived and product-oriented needs; a PSA includes subjective, felt and process-oriented needs; a PSA estimates strengths and weaknesses in language, skills learning experiences". (p.124). Therefore, when we ask why the students need English this corresponds to a *target situation analysis* (there is a goal to be achieved). Differently, by asking which language skill the students use most we are analyzing the learning situation (LSA). The information provided by these two analyses complete each other and helps to decide, for example, what should be prioritized in course design.

Holiday and Cooke, (1982) recommend a means analysis as a complement to needs analysis which would look at the environment of the course taking into account two factors: classroom culture and the management infrastructures and culture. "Means analysis is an acknowledgement that what works well in one situation may not work in another. While hotel staff around the world may share some similar language needs, how they learn the language, the conditions in which they are learning and where and how they apply the language are not the same. So the needs, and how they are prioritized, ordered and then met will be different" (Dudley-Evans & St.John, 1998).

Figure 4: Needs analysis



The conclusions from a needs analysis are not absolute but relative and there is no exclusive set of needs. The conclusions vary according to who is asking the questions, what questions and the interpretation of the answers but, in spite of that, the conclusions should be appropriate to the situation. Ideally, the needs analysis is performed before a course. In practice, sometimes it is not possible to gather previously all the information and the course has to be modified and the initial framework adapted.

Therefore, in conducting the needs analysis, I may arrive to a different conclusion from another colleague undertaking the same task because, even though the questions are the same, the interpretation of the data may differ. Also, it is important to have in mind the students' environment because it influences the materials, the methodology and the success, of an ESP course. For example, the same students will react differently if the course takes place during or after working hours, in the office or in a classroom and the methodology should be adapted to each circumstance. Eventually, those attending a course after working hours will need a longer warm-up or materials that encourage their participation.

### I.7 – Evaluation

As shown on figure 3, evaluation precedes the needs analysis but also follows it, showing to what extent the needs analysis was correct. In fact, good quality needs analysis



(based on a correct evaluation) leads to a successful ESP course; but how to find out the rate of success? Through evaluation.

For Dudley-Evans & St.John (1998) “evaluation is a whole process which begins with determining what information to gather and ends with bringing about change in current activities or influence future ones. [...] evaluation must be more than collecting and analyzing data: to have value the evaluation process must include action”. With regard to evaluation, they also stated that “needs analysis within a course and formative evaluation have much in common [...] the three steps involved in each, mainly collecting data, analyzing data and implementing the results, are very similar”.

Evaluation may be formative or summative but in ESP it is usually formative, i.e., it takes place at intervals and consists of a series of mini-evaluations during the course whose findings will eventually help shape the course. The summative evaluation, which takes place at the end of a course, cannot influence it but it can provide useful information for future courses. To summarize, evaluation in an ESP course refers to the effectiveness of learning and achieving the objectives which were set according to the needs analysis. It may focus on the materials used, classroom activities, course design or methodologies and it will provide clues to modify the existing situation.

## Chapter II

After reading as much as possible about ESP I began searching the internet to find out what had been happening in other countries with ESP teaching and trying to figure out if the problems were the same everywhere and if so, how other people, in different settings, solved them. Therefore, in this Chapter I will look at four different case studies, the reasons behind their success or failure, and what could have been done in a different way, consistent with ESP theories.

### II.1 – Case study 1: An Intensive ESP Course for Research Scientists, India

This case study was published by Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998) to show the importance of needs analysis for course design and it illustrates a very specific ESP situation where a program is drawn up in the UK based on very little pre-course information.

India is a multi-lingual society where English is the mother tongue for some people, a second language for many, the official language of the judiciary and widely spoken. Even though India has a large scientific community it is under-represented in international research journals and the broad target situation of the course was to get articles accepted in international journals with minimal revisions, i.e., the scientific community needed to learn English to improve their writing skills to publish their scientific papers.

The duration of the course was 3.5 days but its length was 20 hours, i.e. almost 6 hours/day. The participants (20 to 40 students) were post-doctoral agriculture and science researchers from universities and research institutions and the teacher used photocopies as course materials. The course objectives for the participants were: 1) to produce more effective journal articles; 2) to increase the rate of acceptance of articles by journal editors; and 3) to spend less time on the whole writing process.

Even though it was not possible to conduct a pre-course needs analysis, the teacher had the answers to some of the questions inherent to the needs analysis. He knew why the students needed English, in what situations they would have to use English, what skills they would use the most. However, the teacher had no information concerning neither what the

students considered as essential nor what the student's current skills and language use were.

Therefore, the program drawn up in the UK had to be modified on delivery to meet the needs as well as the students' expectations.

The major changes that took place on the spot were:

- Re-ordering – covering Introductions before Results;
- Introducing a new topic at the participants' request – Abstracts;
- Spending more time on feedback and revisions;
- Omitting one task – writing a Procedure section.

Based on this experience, the teacher made some major changes for a later course:

1. More on the reading and writing process; looking at why and how articles are read, leading to reader orientation versus writer orientation.
2. More language work, particularly tenses and associated meanings, and creating good links and transitions; areas where even those with wide exposure to English felt unconfident.
3. More on writing a good abstract; readers use this to decide on the value of the article;
4. More attention to learning strategies because of knowing more about the local environment.

This case highlights the importance of needs analysis as well as the role of the teacher as course designer; thanks to the teacher's flexibility the content was changed to fit the real situation. Even though it is difficult to evaluate the course since evaluation is closely related and depends on a good needs analysis as shown on figure 3 page 13, we may assume that the course was successful to a certain extent because the teacher made a few changes for a future course.

## II. 2 – Case study 2: An ESP Course for Bank Staff in Mozambique

Although Mozambique is a Portuguese speaking country, due to its geographic location it became part of the British Commonwealth and as such English is widely used in

many events. The geographic location of Mozambique amidst English speaking countries enhances the need of fluency in English namely in the banking sector ([www.esp-world.info](http://www.esp-world.info)).

The Bank of Mozambique decided to improve its staff's fluency and hired an English teacher with no experience in ESP. The duration of this course was two months, with three classes per week of 1.5 hours, i.e. a total of 36 hours; it was taught after working hours. The participants (20 to 30 students) were mostly front-office staff who needed to improve their speaking skills to help the customers. The participants' background was quite different; some of them having completed secondary education while others - older staff - having just started secondary education. The course objective for the participants was to increase their fluency in English and, in particular, improve their listening skills.

While conducting the needs analysis the teacher, using questionnaires, was able to identify the target needs (TSA) as well the learning situation (LSA). The present situation analysis (PSA) showed clearly the students' different levels of proficiency in English (beginners, pre-intermediate, intermediate). In view of this, the teacher designed a course targeting the pre-intermediate level students hoping that the beginners would make an extra effort and that the intermediate ones would reinforce their knowledge.

All students were motivated because their increased fluency in English would have a positive impact on their careers in the bank. However, as this motivation could have been somehow hampered by the timing of the course, after a long work day, the teacher tried to create a lively course with dialogues and role-playing using flash-cards and photocopies.

In this case, in performing the needs analysis, the teacher got the information about the reasons to study English, the target situation, the skills they would use most and the students' expectations. However, the students' evaluation showed that it was a mistake to have the same course for a heterogeneous class: the success rate among beginners was very low.

The teacher tried to adapt the content of the course to the students' needs but this was practically impossible due to the student's different background. Taking into account that ESP, according to Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998), is designed to meet the specific needs of the learner, we can say that this course failed to meet those needs, thus demonstrating the importance of the assessment of the students' needs in the design of an ESP course.

### II.3 – Case study 3: An ESP Course for Tour Operators in Italy

This example illustrates a situation where the course design is previously discussed with the participants which contributed for the success of the course ( [www.esp-world.info](http://www.esp-world.info)).

The English required for tour operators can be divided into three principal areas: planning a tour, booking a tour and conducting a tour. Since much of a tour operator's work requires direct involvement with clients, speaking and listening skills are of primary importance. However, writing is also necessary for fax, letters, communications, itineraries, etc.

An association of tour operators requested an English teaching school to organize an English course in order to improve their staff's ability to communicate in English. The participants, a total of 25, were staff in charge of planning tours and bookings as well as of conducting the tours.

As a first step, there was a meeting with the participants to discuss their needs and expectations and agree on the course design. The language spoken in the meeting was English and this together with a small questionnaire answered by the participants provided the teacher the clues to perform a present situation analysis (PSA) as well as a learning situation analysis (LSA). Therefore, the ESP teacher became aware of what students considered as essential, what were their skills and language use, which one of those skills was most important and needed improvement, in what situations they used English and which were their expectations.

The course was intensive and it lasted two weeks. During the first week the classes were attended by all the participants, but in the second week they were divided into three groups according to their specific areas. The teaching materials consisted of handouts and as teaching techniques. The teacher also used simulations and role play. The main skills targeted were speaking and listening.

At the end the teacher distributed a questionnaire to the participants to find out their opinion about the course's effectiveness in order to introduce further improvements. The

course got a good rating from the participants. We can assume that this results from the fact that, at the beginning the teacher collected all data necessary for a sound needs analysis which, in turn, led to an effective course design which met the participants' expectations.

#### II.4 – Case study 4: Extensive ESP Course for Students Studying International Banking and Finance at MBA level in the University of Birmingham

The University of Birmingham places great emphasis on running international courses and funds an English for International Students Unit to run classes for such students (Dudley-Evans and St. John 1998). The course is also supported financially by the Business School.

The banking and finance foreign students originally followed the same English course organized for the core MBA group. This was not completely effective for them because they had specific needs related to their field of study and so a separate group was formed. The needs of this new group were determined through discussion with the students and follow-up discussions with the teachers. This way they had all the answers to the questions asked during the needs analysis, i.e. why do the students need English; in what situation will they have to use English; what skill will they use most (speaking, writing, listening, reading); which one of those skills is most important in this particular case and needs to be developed; what do the students consider as essential; what are the students' current skills and language use; what are the students' expectations from the course; and where will the course take place.

The teachers used essentially the same material as for the core MBA group, but it was given a different emphasis. The objectives of the course were to help students with written and oral assignments and it focused during the first term on essay writing, thereafter on oral presentations and/or dissertation writing.

The course lasted two terms with a length of 20 one-hour sessions plus one-to-one tutorials. The size of the group was 10-20 participants who were mostly students from Southeast Asia and the Middle East that needed extra help with English. The materials included specific materials focusing on adopting an academic style through the use of appropriate lexis and grammar, techniques for quotation and citation, describing and discussing data, writing an introduction, a method section and a discussion section for a dissertation.

The students' performance in the course was not assessed but all their subject examinations were in English and so their rate of success depended on their capacity to express themselves in English. Differently from the situation described in Case Study 2, it was understood that foreign students' needs were different from native speakers and the course was tailored to meet those needs. As stated before, evaluation and needs analysis are closely linked. So, we can assume that the course evaluation was positive because the course itself was based on a correct analysis.

We can identify in the above case studies a few different roles of the teacher/practitioner as collaborator (Case 3- discussing course design with participants); course designer (in all case studies); researcher (Case 1 and 3); and evaluator (Case 1). Concerning students' motivation, all of them had good motivation which was to progress in their professional career even though in these four ESP case studies the first three were examples of English for Occupational Purposes (EOP) while the last one was an example of English for Academic Purposes (EAP). All four highlight the importance of the needs analysis for the course design and, as a result, for its success rate.

I selected four different countries, on three different continents, different cultural settings, because I think that this shows that ESP issues are the same everywhere and consequently, they are very likely the same here in Cape Verde.

**Table I – Main Characteristics of the Case Studies**

Case Study	Level of Students	No. of students	Duration	Main lang. skill	Needs Analysis	Teacher's Role
1	Post-doctoral	20-40	20 hours	Writing	No previous needs analysis	Course designer, researcher & evaluator
2	Secondary education and incomplete sec. education	20-30	36 hours	Listening	Done	Course designer
3	Unknown (tour operators)	25	2 weeks	Speaking & Listening	Done	Course designer, researcher & collaborator
4	MBA students	10-20	20 hours	Writing & Speaking	Done	Course designer



## **CHAPTER III**

As the title of this thesis indicates, I wanted to know what has been done in Cape Verde i.e. “are ESP theories applied in Cape Verde?”. First I collected data and then analyzed it; finally I draw a few conclusions which provided the basis for some recommendations concerning future ESP courses in Cape Verde.

### **III.1 – Data Collection**

To collect data I prepared a questionnaire (annex I) which I distributed to five teachers who have taught ESP courses and I used this questionnaire to interview by phone other teachers in S. Vicente and Sal. To draft the questionnaire I looked into the steps that precede the setting-up of an ESP course and tried to figure out which questions should be answered to have a fairly good idea of a given ESP course. Later on, when I was analyzing the data I noticed that I had missed some points, such as the course design. Because time was short, I tried to fill in the gaps by asking questions to the teachers who completed the questionnaires and also interviewing just a few students. Then I compared the information I got with the information provided in the case studies to figure out if there was still something missing. Taking into account that just two teachers filled and returned the questionnaires, the interviews were very important to get the overall picture. However, the information obtained is not exhaustive and I believe that I didn’t cover all ESP courses.

#### ***III.1.1 – The First Steps***

As a Escola Técnica has existed in São Vicente since the colonial period, I anticipated that they should be teaching ESP there (even if they didn’t call it ESP) and contacted an English teacher in S. Vicente to check this idea. Then, surprisingly, I was informed that the first ESP course was taught in S.Vicente in 1984 in Escola Náutica, more precisely a branch of ESP, English for Science and Technology, because it was related to the main course of study which was maritime navigation. English was taught through the whole course and the school had a language laboratory and a library. However, it is not clear if the teachers were aware of the existence of ESP. The course was a natural answer to a perceived need and the syllabus was prepared accordingly.

A few years later, in 1992, the technical school in São Vicente made a breakthrough in the teaching of English by creating an English course targeting accounting and finance for students attending the higher levels of “Curso Comercial”. Until then, even though it was a technical school, students were taught general English. Subsequently, this experience was applied to other courses such as electricity and mechanics. We can say that this was English for Occupational Purposes. However, as it had happened before in Escola Náutica, the courses were the consequence of a need identified by the teachers, and not the result of a deep study or reading about ESP.

Probably, because the Escola Técnica of Praia is recent (1990s) and the only existing institution of superior learning was for many years the “Escola de Formação de Professores”, which became later Instituto Superior de Educação, ESP followed a different path on Santiago Island. ESP courses actually started in Praia in 1993 within the framework of Project CVI/80/85 – Special Training in Import and Export Operations.

### *III.1.2 - Special Training in Import and Export Operations*

This course was proposed by the Ministry of Trade with four years duration and 8 hours per week. It targeted an average of 12 students: graduate students, office heads, executives, importers and exporters.

The content of the course was proposed by the organization with the aims of helping students improve their language performance and build-up their communication skills in the business field (import/export). The teacher had a master’s degree in ESP and she used as resources a course book with a teachers’ guide, overhead projector, tape recorder, TV set and VCR, projection screen, AV (audio visual camera) with flipchart. The students were provided with a Students’ manual with a Glossary of Business Terms, audio-visual materials, audio-cassettes, selected reading materials, a practical guide for extensive practice application and class and guest speakers’ notes.

The course was evaluated by means of an ITC (internal confidential) questionnaire at the end of each phase of the course (Elementary, Intermediate and Advanced), with no feedback provided to the course trainer, given the clauses in the Contract Agreement.

This was a fairly well organized course in terms of materials/resources. Even though the course lasted four years the students were not the same during the entire period. Some attended just one phase, others attended two and they were evaluated at the end of each phase. According to the teacher, this explains the student's different opinions about it. Later on, talking to the teacher, some students confirmed that the course had been very useful while others stated that they didn't take full advantage of it.

### *III.1.3 – PROMEX and USAID NATHAN Associates Course*

This course was organized by PROMEX and USAID and PROMEX provided pre-course information. With this information and the teacher's field knowledge, the teacher prepared an entry test to determine students' needs.

The course started in August 1994 and ended in December 1994; the number of hours per week was 8 hours. The students, in number of 15, were graduates, top office managers of investment areas and early recruited directors. The aims of the course were to help the different categories of trainees by prioritizing aspects of academic writing of investment field reports; to provide consolidation and extension of major structural or grammatical areas. As resources/ learning materials the teacher used handouts, audio-visual and audio-tapes, glossary of investment terminology, lecture and guest speakers' notes organized by NATHAN. The course was evaluated by means of an end-of-training questionnaire proposed by NATHAN with a highly positive feedback from the course candidates.

The needs analysis made by the teacher at the beginning explains the success of the course and the positive feedback from the students.

### *III.1.4 – TACV Cabo Verde Airlines Course*

This course started in October 1995 and ended in 2003. It was taught continually to different staff and organized into two to three sessions of two hours per week; each class had 10 to 15 students.

Pre-course information was provided by the company, but the teacher made pre-entry written tests and interviews. This course was addressed to different categories of staff – secondary or technical school graduates, senior employees and university graduates – and its goals were the selection, training and updating of the knowledge of flight attendants and supervisors, upgrading the four language skills of the maintenance personnel and security staff. The resources/learning materials employed were handouts proposed by the teacher, audio-visual materials, audio-tapes, technical dictionaries, a glossary of specific terms, excerpts of the companies' magazines and general airline information.

Taking into account the continuous aspect of the course it was evaluated by means of internal confidential questionnaire at the end of training with feedback provided by the Board. According to the teacher, the twelve courses organized met the aims.

### *III.1.5 – African Development Bank (ADB)/ Institute of Support to Entrepreneurs (IADE) Course*

This course had one year of duration, from 1996 to 1997, with 6 hours of training per week and it was addressed to 15 students.

ADB proposed this course, but the pre-course information was provided by curriculum assessment and by the participants themselves. The teacher (General English teacher) obtained this information by means of oral entry tests for assessing learners' technical aptitudes. The students were college/university and postgraduate students who graduated in non-English speaking countries and the goals of the course were to help students take business managerial decisions resulting from practical knowledge and experience, for practice-oriented tasks of project leaders. The resources /learning materials available were: overhead projector, four-track tape recorder, TV set and VLP, projection screen, flipcharts, handouts prepared by the teacher, audio-visual materials, glossary of technical terms, informative reading materials provided by the ADB, lecture and guest speakers' notes.

The course was evaluated by means of an end-of-course questionnaire proposed by the trainer as an integral part of the course. According to the teacher who gave this course, based on statistical analysis of the questionnaire findings, we can say that the course met the aims.

However, in my opinion there is some confusion concerning the aims. It seems that English was just a vehicle to improve their managerial skills.

### *III.1.6 – IFAAG Business English Course*

This course was proposed by IFAAG with three years of duration (1995-1998) and 4.5 hours of training per week. It was addressed to 15-18 students, a mixed ability group of secondary, technical and university graduates with little knowledge of Business English.

Pre-course data was gathered by the teacher through observations. The course goals were to broaden course participants' all-round ability in the solidification of business-related skills by means of technical language training; to follow-up their communication skills at 3 levels of the course; and to provide "spot checks" to help students assess their progress in learning. As resources/ learning materials they used overhead projector, tape recorder, TV set, VLP, data show, handouts, business magazines, business dictionaries, poster displays and lecture notes.

Concerning the course evaluation, the informal oral feedback received from the candidates at the end of the training indicates that the course did meet the aims. The pre course data collected by the teacher played an important role in achieving this result.

### *III.1.7 – ISCEE Technical English Course of Management, Marketing and Accounting*

This is an on-going course which started in October 1994, with the opening of ISCEE (Instituto Superior de Ciências Económicas e Empresariais) in Praia and it has two sessions per week of 90 minutes each.

The course was proposed by the Institute, is taught by a teacher with a master's degree in ESP, each class has 20 to 25 students who completed the secondary or technical school. The institute provided pre-course information which was obtained through secondary school certificate. The aims of this course are to give the students an introduction to the vocational areas of accounting management and marketing; to help them develop knowledge and proficiency in technical English for consolidation of managerial competencies; to develop strategies to offset the organization's internal adaptation capabilities and an understanding of

accounting and financial reports. The materials/ learning resources included audio-visual materials, flipchart, handouts, grammar books, technical dictionaries, glossary of succinct definitions, newspaper extracts, lecture notes and school library.

As this course is part of the school curriculum, it is evaluated by means of two end-of-semester questionnaires. So far, it has been considered a successful course according to the information provided by these evaluations.

The goals of this course are quite extensive and the true impact of this course will be felt in a real-life situation when students put their knowledge into practice.

### *III.1.8 – ELI English for Telephone Operators Course*

This course was organized by the English Language Institute (ELI) in 1995, with 6 weeks duration and three hours per week of training.

The course was taught by a native speaker with two years of experience as general English teacher, but whose formal training is a BA in Anthropology. The organizers provided the pre-course information which was later completed by the teacher through questionnaires and the students' assessment. The course was addressed to 4 to 6 students who completed secondary school. The aims were to improve conversational English skills: a) comprehension and accurate response and b) focus on pronunciation exercises to strengthen speaking skills. Concerning the resources/ learning materials the teacher used: English for Tourism based worksheets; original dialogues created for TACV customers and callers; *Pronunciation Exercises for Advanced Learners of English as a Second Language* by Gary Esarey.

The teacher considered that the course met the aims because at the beginning she was given the freedom to set the aims and the goals. Thus, after assessing the students' level, the teacher determined that the majority were at a very low level and that pronunciation and listening skills needed to be cultivated. They were able to create a strong foundation in phonetics within the given timeframe and then they made arrangements for the course to be continued at a later date.

### III.1.9 – GTZ English for Tourism Course in Sal

This course was organized periodically by GTZ (German cooperation) in Sal in the 2000s and targeted people looking for a job in a restaurant; we can say that it is an English for Occupational Purposes course.

The different teachers who taught this course were general English teachers; in general all of them made an initial assessment of the students to design the course. Usually the course lasted two weeks with 8 hours of training per week. Some students had no knowledge of English at all, while others were at the beginners' level. The aim of the course was to provide the students with some basic English knowledge to answer queries from the clients in a restaurant. The resources/ learning materials used included handouts, realia and audio-visual materials. There is no data concerning course evaluation.

We can see here that, even though the teachers were general English teachers, they performed a needs analysis to assist them in course design. Considering that the students' level was quite different, I think that the course didn't have the necessary conditions to reach success.

## III. 2 – Data Analysis

If we consider that needs analysis is at the core of any ESP course, we will conclude that some of the above courses didn't have all the answers to the questions made during the needs analysis. In fact, in those ESP courses the teacher knew *why* the students needed English, in *what* situation they would use English, *what* were students' current skills and language use and *where* the course would take place.

There was information concerning what skill the students would use most in two courses only (III.1.7 and III.1.8, listening and speaking) as well as to which one of the skills was most important and needed to be developed. Even though there was in some cases a questionnaire at the beginning of the course it was aimed at determining the students' level and not what they considered as essential in terms of content. Instead, the courses took into account what the organizers /promoters considered as essential. For the same reason we don't know which were the students' expectations from the courses. In view of the above and taking into

account that the evaluation is the process of establishing the effectiveness and its connection to the needs analysis, any evaluation of the courses would be invalid.

The ESP course should be designed to meet the learner's specific needs, but as the teachers didn't have all the information concerning those needs the courses were designed to meet the aims established by the organizers/ promoters, who had a perception that their staff needed to improve their English skills but had no idea how to tackle this. In fact, they thought that it was enough to provide training in English without reflecting on pedagogical or methodological issues. In one particular case (III.1.4), the aims of the course were not related to the English language itself; English was used as a vehicle to improve other skills. There is one exception, the course for telephone operators (III.1.7), where the teacher was free enough to set the aims according to the learners' needs. Here the ESP teacher was acting as collaborator and course designer.

Concerning the evaluation of the ESP courses, although the information provided by the teachers states that the evaluation was positive and that courses met the aims, I don't agree. Actually, there are close ties between evaluation and needs analysis; if the needs analysis one is not correct (and that was the case), the evaluation will show it. According to Dudley-Evans and St.John (1998) "... evaluation must be more than collecting and analyzing data: to have value the evaluation process must include action".

In all the above courses, except for the course for telephone operators (III.1.7), evaluation wouldn't bring any action, change or improvement, or be useful for reference in future needs analysis and/or course planning because it considered the courses to be successful. As I said before, evaluation in an ESP course refers to the effectiveness of learning and achieving the objectives which were set according to the needs analysis. It may focus on the materials used, classroom activities, course design or methodologies and it will provide clues to modify the existing situation.



**Table II – Main Characteristics of ESP Courses in Cape Verde**

ESP Course	Level of Students	No. of students	Duration	Main lang. skill	Needs Analysis	Teacher's Role
III.1.2	Univ. graduate students	12	8h/week	Listening & speaking	No previous needs analysis	Course designer & materials provider
III.1.3	Univ. graduate students	15	8h/week	Writing	Done	Course designer
III.1.4	University graduates, secondary and technical school graduates	10-15	6-8h/week	Writing, reading, speaking & listening	Done	Course designer & materials provider
III.1.5	University and postgraduate students	15	6h/week	Unknown	Done	Course designer & collaborator
III.1.6	Mixed ability group	15-18	4.5h/week	Writing, reading, speaking & listening	Done	Course designer & materials provider
III.1.7	Secondary school level	20-25	3h/week	Reading & writing	No needs analysis	Researcher
III.1.8	Secondary school level	4-6	3h/week	Listening & speaking	Done	Course designer & collaborator
III.1.9	Mixed ability group	Unknown	Unknown	Listening & speaking	Done	Course designer

### III. 3 – Conclusions and Recommendations

People may argue that the eight ESP courses are not representative enough of what has been done in the field of ESP in Cape Verde or to answer my research question “Are ESP theories applied in Cape Verde?” I have been making some enquiries and found out that here, in Praia, there were at least the same number of courses for which I couldn’t get any information. There were ESP courses organized by BCA and Telecom for their staff and by INIDA and ELI for their students. However from the discussions I had not only with students but with teachers as well, both from ESP courses covered in this paper as well as those not included, I found out that the ESP courses organized in Cape Verde have many aspects in common, namely:

- The answer to the question “Who provided the pre-course information?” was the organizers, meaning that the courses don’t answer the students’ demands but the needs perceived by the institutions.
- Quite often the institutions do not have an exact idea of their needs. They feel it would be good for the institution if their staff were more proficient in English because English is the language of commerce and opportunity, but they don’t know what the desirable proficiency level is or which language skill should be more developed.
- Institutions haven’t heard about ESP and don’t see the point of doing needs analysis (they think they know perfectly the present situation), they have no idea about the role of the teacher and the importance of course design.
- The teachers, many of them General English Teachers, not ESP trained, experience some difficulty to impose what is considered the right approach.
- Frequently, the students have different levels of proficiency which has implications on the course design and creates some complexity when evaluating the course.

- In the above context, students' assessment becomes difficult which may explain the lack of assessment in many courses.
- According to some teachers as well as some students, many students when inquired about the impact of the ESP course on their professional life, believe that the course was interesting but it didn't meet their expectations and they seldom apply the newly acquired language skills to their profession.
- The time period of a few courses was too short to effectively reinforce students' language skills, due to the students' low level of proficiency.
- Exceptions to the above paragraph are the ESP courses integrated in the school curricula, such as ESP taught at ISE, ISECMAR or ISCEE. But repeatedly the students fail to understand the rationale behind the course and do a minimum effort, as it is the case with Geography students at ISE.
- It is almost impossible to determine without any doubt the rate of success of ESP courses.

In view of the above and in spite of the limitations of this study resulting from the low number of returned questionnaires, I would recommend for ESP courses in Cape Verde that teachers should confirm the data provided by the institution organizing or sponsoring the ESP course and negotiate with the institution a period to perform the needs analysis with the students in order to design the course accordingly.

As we saw in Chapter II, Case Study 1, the teacher, who had no information concerning neither what the students considered as essential nor what the student's current skills and language use were, decided to modify the program of the course in order to meet the students' needs and expectations. In my opinion, this kind of action, if followed in Cape Verde, will facilitate the teacher's task, improve course design and contribute to the effectiveness of the course, which should be measured by means of a final double evaluation, i.e. evaluation of the students performed by the teacher and evaluation of the course performed by the students.

These evaluations are very important because they will show what needs improvement or modification and provide information for future ESP courses.

Considering the common characteristics of ESP courses in Cape Verde listed on pages 33 and 34, I believe that ESP theories are not fully applied in this country.

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**Annex I****QUESTIONNAIRE**

ESP course title: \_\_\_\_\_

Course duration: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ No. hours/week: \_\_\_\_\_

Requested by (institution/ learners) \_\_\_\_\_

No. of students: \_\_\_\_\_

Pre-course information

Data provided by: Students ☐ Organizers ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Data obtained through: Questionnaires ☐ Interviews ☐ Observation ☐  
Assessment ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Students' academic background: Secondary school ☐ Higher education ☐ Both ☐

Teacher information

Training received \_\_\_\_\_

No. of ESP courses taught \_\_\_\_\_ No. of years as a teacher \_\_\_\_\_

Course design

Aim(s) of course \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Resources/ learning materials \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Course evaluation

Did the course meet the aims? Why or why not?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Please attach any course documentation/syllabus you may have. Thank you for your participation!